

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 DHA-02 ACDA-07 AID-05 TRSE-00

/099 W

-----104100 272356Z /73

R 272245Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6537

INFO USUN NEW YORK 599

AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 GUATEMALA 4036

E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: PBOR, SHUM, GT, UK, BH, US

SUBJ: GUATEMALAN PRESIDENT ESCALATES HIS RHETORIC ON BELIZE
DISPUTE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: GUATEMALA 3723

1. SUMMARY. IN A FORMAL PUBLIC STATEMENT, GUATEMALAN PRESIDENT LAUGERUD MADE HIS STRONGEST CRITICISM TO DATE OF US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND AT SAME TIME REAFFIRMED THE THEORY SET FORTH IN AN EARLIER STATEMENT BY HIS PRESS SECRETARY (REFTTEL) THAT GUATEMALA IS THE TARGET OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY TO DEPRIVE IT OF ITS BELIZEAN TERRITORY. HE FOLLOWED THIS THE NEXT DAY WITH A BRIEF BUT EMOTIONAL PROMISE TO LEAD THE ARMY IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO DEFEND GUATEMALAN SOVEREIGNTY. END SUMMARY

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. AT CEREMONY JUNE 23 IN WHICH VISITING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PERUVIAN FONMIN AWARDED HIM A DECORATION, LAUGERUD SAID IN HIS SPEECH OF THANKS: "PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA LOOK WITH SYMPATHY ON THE VOCATION, THE DEDICATION, AND THE DECISION OF PERU TO SAFEGUARD, PROTECT AND ASSURE ITS NATIONAL RESOURCES AND VALUES. IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT WE NECESSARILY SHARE YOUR POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY IN ORDER FOR US TO RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT YOUR EFFORT AND

VIGILANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM. AT A TIME WHEN THE GREAT IMPERIAL POWERS ARE SEEKING TO BOLSTER THEIR POWER THROUGH NEW FORMS OF COLONIALISM, THE EXISTENCE, THE MEANING, AND THE ACTION OF NATIONALISM CONSTITUTE THE BEST WEAPONS IN OUR DEFENSE OF COUNTRIES THAT ARE THE OBJECT OF THE GLUTTONY OF LARGER NATIONS.

3. "CERTAINLY THIS IS A TIME OF SOPHISTICATED KINDS OF COLONIALISM. TODAY THEY DO NOT SEEK ONLY OUR MINERALS OR OUR AGRICULTURAL RAW MATERIALS, BUT ALSO DESIRE TO RULE OUR SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH EXTERNAL CODES GOVERNING THE BEHAVIOR OF OUR GOVERNMENTS. THEY WANT TO IMPOSE A FOREIGN GOSPEL, DESTROYING OUR OWN INSTITUTIONS, ALL IN THE NAME OF MAN AND OF HIS RIGHTS, BUT FOR THE BENEFIT OF IMPERIAL CAUSES.

4. "PEOPLES OF PERU AND GUATEMALA CANNOT, OF COURSE, SUBMIT WITHOUT COMBATTING THE INTERNATIONAL FORCES FROM WHATEVER DIRECTION THAT SEEK TO DESTROY THEIR TERRITORY, INSTITUTIONS, SPIRIT, AND NATIONAL VALUES. AS FAR AS GUATEMALA IS CONCERNED, OUR COUNTRY IS RIGHT NOW THE OBJECT OF A CONSPIRACY SPONSORED BY AN EXTRAHEMISPHERIC POWER THAT SEEKS TO DISMEMBER OUR NATIONAL TERRITORY. FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, GUATEMALA HAS DEFENDED ITS LEGITIMATE HISTORIC, LEGAL, AND MORAL RIGHTS TO THE TERRITORY OF BELIZE.
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5. "BELIZE IS A TERRITORY ILLEGALLY AND MILITARILY OCCUPIED BY GREAT BRITAIN. BELIZE IS NOT AND NEVER HAS BEEN AN AUTONOMOUS TERRITORY NOR ONE SEPARATED FROM OURS, BUT PART OF OUR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, PART OF OUR TERRITORIAL UNITY. THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT IT HAS BEEN OCCUPIED BY GREAT BRITAIN DOES NOT MODIFY THESE FACTS AND IT IS A MATTER SIMPLY OF AN AGGRESSION AGAINST OUR TERRITORY BY THE AFORESAID EXTRAHEMISPHERIC POWER."

6. AT LEAST ONE NEWSPAPER GAVE THE SPEECH AN 8-COLUMN BANNER AND REFERRED TO LAUGERUD'S "SUBTLE CRITICAL ALLUSION TO THE POLICY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES ON HUMAN RIGHTS." CEREMONY AT WHICH SPEECH WAS MADE WAS CARRIED BY GOVERNMENT ORDER ON ALL THREE TV NETWORKS IN PRIME TIME JUNE 24.

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 DHA-02 ACDA-07 AID-05 TRSE-00
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R 272245Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6538
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7. AT INAUGURATION JUNE 24 OF NEW BARRACKS FOR PRESIDENTIAL
GUARD, PRESIDENT LAUGERUD SAID IN COURSE OF DEDICATION
SPEECH, "WE GUATEMALANS KNOW THAT THE NATIONAL ARMY IS
THE FAITHFUL GUARDIAN OF OUR SOVEREIGNTY AND THEREFORE,
WHenever IT MAY BE NECESSARY AND WE MAY HAVE TO TAKE UP
ARMS TO MAINTAIN OUR LIBERTIES AND THE SOVEREIGNTY
OF OUR NATION, I, AS COMMANDING GENERAL, WILL BE AT THE
HEAD OF ALL AND ONLY GOD WILL BE ABLE TO HOLD US BACK,
BECAUSE WE ARE NOT DISPOSED (TO ALLOW) FOREIGN POWERS TO
STAIN THE SOIL OF THE FATHERLAND. THE FATHERLAND
DESERVES ANY SACRIFICE FROM TRUE BORN GUATEMALANS."
END UNCLASSIFIED.

8. BEGIN LOU. COMMENT: JUNE 23 SPEECH CONFIRMS OTHER
REPORTS WE HAD RECEIVED OF LAUGERUD'S BITTER REACTION TO
WHAT HE SEES AS DIFFICULTIES AND COMPLICATIONS FOR
GOG AS RESULT OF US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. FIRST AND
FOREMOST, US HAS PUT HIM IN POSITION WHERE HE SAW
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HIMSELF AS FORCED TO REJECT US MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND
TRAINING WHICH HAVE IN PAST BEEN KEY ELEMENT IN GUATEMALAN
MILITARY PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION. SECOND, US HAS PROVED,
PARTLY BECAUSE OF BELIZE AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF HUMAN
RIGHTS, TO BE UNRELIABLE SUPPLIER OF EVEN ROUTINE CASH

PURCHASES NEED BY GUATEMALAN ARMY. THIRD, LAUGERUD FEARS THAT IF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY CARRIED MUCH FURTHER, HE AND GOG WILL BE SERIOUSLY EMBARRASSED IN MIDST OF CURRENT PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND HIS EFFORTS TO KEEP RIGHT AND LEFT-WING VIOLENCE UNDER CONTROL FRUSTRATED. OUR FUTURE DIALOGUE WITH GOG ON HUMAN RIGHTS WILL HAVE TO TAKE THIS ATTITUDE CAREFULLY INTO ACCOUNT.

9. WE SEE HIS COMMENTS ON BELIZE AS LESS SERIOUS. THEY STEM FROM SOME OF THE SAME FACTORS JUST REFERRED TO AND ARE DESIGNED TO INDICATE THAT THIS IS A DELICATE PERIOD FOR GUATEMALA AND THAT THERE ARE LIMITS BEYOND WHICH IT CANNOT BE PUSHED WITHOUT AN EMOTIONAL, EVEN IRRATIONAL REACTION. LAUGERUD IS SERVING NOTICE THAT HE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL THAT REACTION AND IN FACT WOULD HAVE TO TRY TO PUT HIMSELF AT THE HEAD OF IT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN POWER.
BOSTER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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